

Previous attempts at regulating telemarketers have failed because new technologies have rendered "do not call" lists ineffective. First of all, telemarketers automatically dial 8 to 10 times as many calls as they have a live bodies to answer. This means that I am disturbed many times during the day to answer a phone with only dead air. I have no chance to request to be added to their "don't call" list. Secondly, many telemarketers send just a recorded message with no option to get a live person. Again, there is no way a "do not call" list would be effective.

I suggest that each consumer be able to set his own cost of disturbance. This proposal would make each telemarketer call a toll call. Each consumer would post his toll call amount. Telemarketers would be billed for the toll and the amount applied against each consumers' phone bill, whether or not the telemarket actually speaks to the consumer.

This would not require an expensive change to the telephone infrastructure. Today's exchanges are able to capture via *57 the telephone number of nuisance calls. A similar star code would allow the consumer to indicate and charge telemarketers calls. The local exchange provider would handle the billing of a telemarketer and the distribution of the proceeds. He would be entitled to a cut, and local and federal taxing authorities could have a cut as well. The objective is to give the poor consumer some peace. This free-market solution is preferable to additional set of regulations.

Thank you,

Robert H. Seegal